

Aviation Security Force Assistance: A 21st Century Imperative

by

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AVIATION SECURITY FORCE ASSISTANCE – A 21ST CENTURY IMPERATIVE

by

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ABSTRACT

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Where U.S. and partner nations' national interests intersect, the role of aviation cannot be overstated. No other means enables nations to close in time and space with events or circumstances affecting security and stability as effectively as aviation. If U.S. national security is directly linked to partner nations' ability to provide for their own security, it is in our national interest to build their aviation capabilities. Just as aviation development efforts with Colombia, the Republic of Korea and NATO have been incremental, decade's long, requiring a range of capabilities, an expanded spectrum of partners will require an expanded menu of options appropriate to their economic, human capital and infrastructure resources. Development of aviation security force assistance (AvSFA) capability within the Department of Defense for a range of partners has been directed. However, a Joint solution is likely the most efficient approach to link Service unique aviation competencies, provide for coordinated planning and operational employment and sufficient advocacy in a fiscally constrained environment. The Air Force Aviation Enterprise Development concept could be a Joint solution and serve as a foundation for broader interagency civil and military aviation development efforts.

AVIATION SECURITY FORCE ASSISTANCE: A 21ST CENTURY IMPERATIVE

Korea has not been the only battleground since the end of the Second World War. Men have fought and died in Malaya, in Greece, in the Philippines, in Algeria and Cuba and Cyprus, and almost continuously on the Indo-Chinese Peninsula. No nuclear weapons have been fired. No massive nuclear retaliation has been considered appropriate. This is another type of war, new in its intensity, ancient in its origin--war by guerrillas, subversives, insurgents, assassins, war by ambush instead of by combat; by infiltration, instead of aggression, seeking victory by eroding and exhausting the enemy instead of engaging him. It is a form of warfare uniquely adapted to what has been strangely called "wars of liberation," to undermine the efforts of new and poor countries to maintain the freedom that they have finally achieved. It preys on economic unrest and ethnic conflicts. It requires in those situations where we must counter it, and these are the kinds of challenges that will be before us in the next decade if freedom is to be saved, a whole new kind of strategy, a wholly different kind of force, and therefore a new and wholly different kind of military training.¹

— John F. Kennedy, West Point, 1962

Aviation is a Critical Competent of Security Force Assistance

The capabilities represented by aviation are a critical component of United States military capabilities across the Services and for our civil interagency government and aviation, likewise is a cornerstone of our national economic and social infrastructure. Aviation capabilities are an essential integrated component of modern militaries and civil infrastructure for developed nations the world over. A former Air Force 6th Special Operations Squadron combat aviation advisor (CAA) postulated the following as the theme of his doctoral thesis on aviation resource development, "Is it possible, in the 21st century, for a nation to provide for its economic, security and social interests without a capable aviation enterprise?" As a nation's economic, social and security needs are

inexorably linked, I believe as demonstrated by our own and other modern nations' integration of, and reliance on aviation, the whole of aviation development and therefore aviation security force assistance as a component, is a strategic imperative for securing U.S. national interests.

Emphasis on building partner capacity as a significant component of U.S. Strategy, was first articulated in the 2006 Quadrennial Defense Review (QDR), re-emphasized in the 2010 QDR, and refined by subsequent strategic guidance. Most recently this emphasis is re-affirmed and linked to strategic objectives within the January 2012 Department of Defense strategic guidance: Sustaining U.S. Global Leadership: Priorities for 21st Century Defense² and the Joint Operational Access Concept (JOAC)³. Building partner capacity is more than sales and transfer of defense articles and services to a partner nation, and so too is aviation Security Force Assistance (AvSFA) more than introducing aircraft to a partner nation. Aviation is by nature a system of systems. Operating aircraft is the net result of developing the human capital, infrastructure, support processes, policies and organizations, to name a few, requisite for maintaining, operating and sustaining the component entities of aviation resources.

As the continent of Africa is of strategic interest due to the potential for threats from trans-national terrorist and criminal organizations, the prevalence of weak or failing states and vast areas of ungoverned or under-governed spaces, it is useful to provide a general sense of scale for potential demand for AvSFA, within the continent of Africa. Comprised of fifty-four nations and roughly three times the land area of the continental United States, Africa has less than 800 paved runways of varying length and condition;

of these, nearly one-third of which are located in only four countries, South Africa having 147 while in the United States, paved runways number nearly 5,200. Comparatively, the ratio of paved runways for equivalent land mass would equate to only 266 paved runways in the U.S. if the U.S. were at a similar stage of aviation development. How challenged would the United States be in providing for the security, social and economic needs of our nation if this were the case?

This paper will analyze aviation requirements as a component of security force assistance as articulated in strategic guidance across the spectrum of partner nations – from those peer/near-peer partners with mature militaries and institutions to emerging partners with nascent or rudimentary militaries and institutions. It will examine the evolution of aviation foreign internal defense (AvFID) and introduce Aviation Security Force Assistance (AvSFA) as a subcomponent of SFA. The Air Force’s “Aviation Enterprise Development” concept will be discussed as a means to broaden aviation security force assistance into a whole of government effort. Additionally, this paper will examine the gap between current and projected AvSFA demand and capabilities represented by current force development efforts, Service force structure and resourcing initiatives for aviation security force assistance (AvSFA). Further, the degree to which current capabilities and capacity match strategic guidance and objectives will be examined and whether emerging efforts effectively and efficiently align with national interest. A way ahead will be presented to enable DoD to provide AvSFA capability and capacity as part of a broad whole of government approach to achieve strategic objectives. Although significant articulation of the challenges and limitations associated with legislative authorities and funding have been voiced from DoD, the Services and

Combatant Commands related to security assistance, these topics will not be specifically addressed as they are being evaluated and addressed through Department of Defense, Service and Congressional forums.

Security Force Assistance – Preventative Strategy, Enduring Requirement

The 2012 Department of Defense strategic guidance, 2010 National Security Strategy, 2010 Joint Forces Command Joint Operating Environment report, 2006 and 2010 Quadrennial Defense Review, 2010 Department of State Quadrennial Diplomacy and Development Review, and 2008 National Intelligence Council Global Trends 2025 report all highlight the dynamic and complex security challenges of the twenty-first century. Each of these documents, along with numerous studies, think-tank, academia and national security expert reports and forums, emphasize countering what have been termed irregular threats through indirect action in the form of building partner capacity (BPC) and capability. The military component, security force assistance (SFA), an expansion of the concept of foreign internal defense (FID), together with stability operations and humanitarian aid/disaster relief (HA/DR) are favored over direct action as the main lines of effort. These indirect activities are oriented toward enabling partner nations to provide for their own security requirements, serve their relevant populations as well support U.S. interests including ensuring access, mitigating ungoverned and under-governed spaces and bolstering regional stability and regional influence. Though strategic documents articulate the “inextricable link” between U.S. strategic interests and building the capacity of foreign partners’ security forces and institutions, little is said about the aviation component of such efforts. Beyond this, there is an absence of a broader inter-governmental approach to developing aviation capabilities spanning the development of both civil and military aviation requisite for nations limited in economic,

infrastructure and human capital resources. Consider the integral nature of aviation to the fabric of U.S. domestic and military capabilities, the ability to connect the population, conduct national and international commerce and respond to local and national crises. If U.S. strategic interests and objectives are to be achieved through increased emphasis on capacity building efforts through indirect lines of effort, significant attention must be given to the role aviation should play in these efforts, linking inter agency capabilities, expertise, authorities and equity to a whole of government strategy.

Security Force Assistance for the 21st Century – Beyond NATO and peer partners

The United States has formally engaged in assisting partner nations to develop their own military capabilities in support of U.S. national interests since the Lend-Lease program prior to U.S. entry into World War II. Following World War II, U.S. partner nation capacity and capability development programs and authorities were structured for Cold War efforts with partners using similar equipment, with established institutions and economies capable of absorbing and sustaining introduction of developmental capabilities. Evidence of the limitations of U.S. developmental programs, authorities and forces to support these efforts emerged during the Vietnam conflict where unsynchronized, sometimes countervailing U.S. efforts led to advent of the Civil Operations and Revolutionary Development Support (CORDS) program to address disconnects in strategic and operational unity of effort and unity of command. Former Secretary of Defense Robert M. Gates, writing in Foreign Affairs stated:

In coming years, the greatest threats to the United States are likely to emanate from states that cannot adequately govern themselves or secure their own territory. The U.S. government must improve its ability to help its partners defend themselves or, if necessary, fight alongside U.S. troops.⁴

This statement reflects ongoing efforts to re-balance U.S. capabilities, particularly within the Department of Defense, to more effectively and efficiently engage a broader range of foreign partners through security cooperation and security assistance in building partner capacity to support shared national security interests.

The challenge of integrating whole of government efforts continues today with employment of Provincial Reconstruction Teams (PRTs) comprised of interagency representation and expertise in Iraq and Afghanistan. The emphasis on sustaining and expanding the ability to conduct building capacity and capability activities is reflective of strategic guidance and plans, but its relative importance is also detailed in the 2011 Joint Operating Environment report which describes the challenges to national security for which the U.S. is attempting to adjust to through institutionalizing relevant security force assistance capability and capacity.

Evidence from efforts in Iraq and Afghanistan to both build and rebuild indigenous military and civilian security capabilities demonstrate military and civilian gaps and shortfalls in capability and capacity to effectively and efficiently achieve developmental objectives. Challenges for DoD range across the familiar doctrine, organization, training, material, leadership, personnel and facilities (DOTMLPF) spectrum used to identify and categorize capability gaps, potential solutions, initiatives, risk and investment. The 2006 Quadrennial Defense Review (QDR) first documented building partner capacity gaps and articulated guidance to the Services to address challenges and identify additional challenges and solutions. Since then, a myriad of working groups, capability based assessments, policies, guidance, doctrine, initiatives, refinement and development of new terms, like “security force assistance” have failed to

enable the Department and the Services to develop real, institutional capability for building partner capacity. This is fundamentally the result of an absence of defined requirements for SFA capabilities coming from Combatant Commands, without which, the Services are unable to make capability risk and investment decisions.

Each of the Services employs and supports aviation capabilities as an integral component of their force structure and warfighting capability. Partner nation aviation capacity building is recognized as crucial to efforts in Iraq and Afghanistan and is an acknowledged enduring requirement to support broader long-term U.S. security interests and objectives. However, development of aviation security force assistance capability and capacity within DoD has been met with steadfast resistance by some Services while tepidly accepted by others. The 2010 Guidance for Employment of the Force (GEF) describes the main themes of security cooperation in support of Department of Defense (DoD) strategic goals and intermediate objectives as “building capacity and capability, facilitating access, and building relationships.”⁵ In addition, the 2010 GEF states that “The Department will give priority to building the capacity and capability of partners as a means of furthering security cooperation objectives and meeting theater or functional end states.”⁶ The Department of Defense defines security force assistance (SFA) as “Department activities that contribute to unified action by the U.S. government to support the development of the capacity and capability of foreign security forces and their supporting institutions.”⁷ SFA is nested under the Tier 1 Building Partnerships (BP) Joint Capability Areas (JCA), Tier 2 Shape JCA, and Tier 3 “build the capabilities and capacities of partners and institutions” JCA as “assist domestic and foreign partners and institutions with the development of their capabilities

and capacities for mutual benefit to address U.S. national or shared global security interests.”⁸

The U.S. Cold War development model, born of pre- and post- World War II era efforts focused on NATO allies and relative “peer” partners who could afford to acquire and operate our equipment, is unsuited for enabling less capable partners to develop appropriate capabilities according to our national interests their needs and economic, infrastructure and human capital sustainment capacity. The current strategic emphasis on developing the capability to build the capacity of less capable partner nations in no way supplants the programs appropriate for traditional, more mature nations such as Japan, Australia, Canada and those resident in NATO. Indeed, a richer menu of options to meet the unique needs and capabilities of a variety of partner nations and choices of equipment will yield greater flexibility and capacity to meet mutual security interests and objectives. AvSFA operations with partner nations in the initial developmental stages of aviation may be characterized as conducted in relatively austere conditions, by small teams with little organic support, requiring attuned cultural and linguistic awareness and agility, demanding the most mentally mature, astute and adaptable individuals to train, advise and assist in non-U.S. equipment and platforms – a departure from the Cold War paradigm.

Any U.S. aviation unit can assess, train, advise and assist a partner nation operating like equipment conducting similar operations. However, the nuanced art of advising foreign nationals requires a skill set and mindset attuned to the task which is fundamentally different than traditional military roles, and bears with it potentially catastrophic consequences both operationally and strategically for missteps in advising.

Therefore, careful consideration must be given to the personnel who are placed in an advisory role. Services must establish policies and processes to appropriately assess, select, and vet military members serving in an advisory role, particularly in early stages of nascent relationships and developing foundational capabilities. The challenge for the U.S. and the imperative for a robust aviation security force assistance capability, resides in the global demand for conducting these activities with partner nations whose institutions are immature or non-existent. Those nations who do not operate equipment similar to that of the United States or do not have an established aviation infrastructure require a phased developmental strategy to evolve into a competent aviation resource for the partner nation. In these cases, persistent foundational developmental engagement is required, from the tactical to ministerial levels and from initial qualification leading to advanced operational development and employment.

Strategic Guidance

The 2006 Quadrennial Defense Review began to address the reduction in the likelihood of peer adversary conventional conflict and the challenges of rebuilding military forces in Iraq and Afghanistan, while broadening the narrative to address the “irregular” challenges proliferating into the 21st century. Much of the focus was directly related to building the capacity of other nations facing their own security challenges or contributing forces to coalition efforts in Iraq and Afghanistan. Global outlooks describe an expanding number of at-risk and developing nations facing internal and external threats to their stability and a limited or outright inability to effectively monitor and control vast areas within their borders. These areas known as ungoverned or under-governed spaces, used as safe havens by trans-national terrorist and criminal organizations, establish the link to U.S strategic interests and a component of emphasis

on building partner capacity. The growing threat to U.S. national security interests emanating from nations unable to mitigate internal or external threats, coupled with sanctuary provided to transnational terrorist and criminal organizations in ungoverned or under-governed spaces resulted in recognition that then current force structure required “rebalancing” to better meet the defense requirements in coming years. The 2006 QDR recognized applicability of the unique capabilities of special operations forces (SOF) together with their traditional role in foreign internal defense (FID) in developing and mentoring the military or paramilitary forces of foreign nations to address their security challenges. This coupled with the projected global scale for building the capacity of partner nation’s security forces and institutions in support of U.S. national interests, led to identification of a shortfall in SOF capacity for these missions. The attributes of special operation forces, (unique cultural and linguistic training, the roles of training, advising and assisting foreign forces and small unit skills, among others), drove the direction to the Services to develop special operations forces “like” capabilities within the general purpose force structure for the purpose of training, advising and assisting foreign forces to build partner capacity.

The 2010 QDR emphasizes a continuing need to rebalance the force⁹ and further focuses on doing so to “build the security capacity of partner states.”¹⁰ Within this area, the 2010 QDR highlights DoD efforts to “build the security capacity of allied and partner states” since World War II and refined previous 2006 QDR direction by specifically articulating that DoD will “strengthen and expand capabilities for training partner aviation forces.”¹¹ DoD Instruction 5000.68, Security Force Assistance, states:

The Department of Defense shall develop and maintain capabilities to:

(1) Organize, train, equip, and advise foreign military forces.

(2) Support the development of the capability and capacity of host-country defense institutions and ministries.

(3) Conduct SFA across all domains – air, land, maritime, and cyberspace – in both permissive and contested environments, under steady-state or surge conditions.¹²

Aviation as a Critical Capability

The capabilities represented by aviation are a critical component of United States military capabilities across the Services and for our civil interagency government and aviation, likewise is a cornerstone of our national economic and social infrastructure. Aviation capabilities are an essential integrated component of modern militaries and civil infrastructure for developed nations the world over. A former 6th Special Operations Squadron combat aviation advisor (CAA) postulated the following as the theme of his doctoral thesis on aviation resource development, “Is it possible, in the 21st century, for a nation to provide for its economic, security and social interests without a capable aviation enterprise?” As a nation’s economic, social and security needs are inexorably linked, I believe as demonstrated by our own integration of aviation and that of modern nations, that aviation development and therefore aviation security force assistance, is a strategic imperative for securing U.S. national interests. As the continent of Africa is of strategic interest due to the potential for threats from trans-national terrorist and criminal organizations, the prevalence weak or failing states and vast areas of ungoverned or under-governed spaces, it is useful to provide a general sense of scale for potential demand for AvSFA, within the continent of Africa. Comprised of fifty-four nations and roughly three times the land area of the continental United States, Africa has less than 800 paved runways of varying length and condition; of these, nearly one-third of are located in only four countries, South Africa having 147 while in the U.S., paved runways

number nearly 5,200. Comparatively, the ratio of paved runways for equivalent land mass would equate to only 266 paved runways in the U.S. if the U.S. were at a similar stage of aviation development. How challenged would the United States be in providing for the security, social and economic needs of our nation if this were the case?

Aviation Security Force Assistance (AvSFA) should be viewed and employed as a unique and critical component of overall U.S. and DoD building partner capacity strategy and force structure in support of national interests. Where the intersection of U.S. and partner nation interests meet in developing aviation capabilities, the U.S. must have the capability and capacity to facilitate that development. Aviation Security Force Assistance (AvSFA) as an indirect line of effort, is intellectually antithetical to the traditionally conventional combat oriented roles and missions of the Services and the Joint Force. Each Service has unique aviation missions and capabilities applicable to developing partner capacity, but absent a holistic narrative for AvSFA, has developed a different perspective on their roles and missions relative to aviation in SFA. The Joint Force as a whole is struggling institutionally with adapting conventional force structure under the mantra of “rebalancing the force” to counter “irregular threats”. In his June 2010 article in Foreign Affairs, then Secretary Gates highlighted this challenge from the perspective of coordinating security assistance authorities, programs and activities, characterizing them as being “...scattered across different parts of the military.” The Air Force’s Secretary of the Air Force International Affairs directorate was cited as being an exception to this by Secretary Gates.¹³ However, Secretary Gates laudatory comment toward Air Force coordination of foreign military sales and security assistance activities at the Service level, he failed to capture the absence of a single coordinating element

for organizing, training, equipping and employment of forces within the Air Force to conduct operations focused on building the capacity of partner nations. Similarly, the Defense Security Cooperation Agency performs a program management function at the Department level for sale, lease, grant or transfer of defense articles while planning and operations originate and are executed within combatant commands, Services and U.S. embassies.¹⁴ The April 2011 Security Cooperation Reform Task Force (SCRTF) Phase 1 report stated “security cooperation planning at the country level is largely reactive” rather than linked to an integrated, phased development strategy. The absence of institutional planning and execution leadership is highlighted as “a matter of system design and is reflected in DoD’s lack of a coherent end-to end “strategy-based, capability requirements to resources to execution” process for security cooperation and FMS (foreign military sales) planning at the country level.”¹⁵ DoD efforts appear to have been focused on the sales and transfer of defense articles and training via happenstance instead of driven by a deliberate developmental strategy tied to planning and execution in support of mutual national interests.

Transforming Aviation Advising for the 21st Century – Beyond Special Operations

Air Force Special Operations Command’s (AFSOC) 6th Special Operations Squadron (6th SOS), with lineage from 1944, was established as a squadron in 1994 focused on aviation foreign internal defense (AvFID) and is the only unit conducting aviation capability and capacity building with partner nations as its primary, designed operational capability mission. The Airmen of the 6th SOS, Combat Aviation Advisors (CAA), specialize in training foreign forces in advanced or tactical employment of aviation resources, on the equipment and aircraft, both fixed and rotary wing, operated by the partner nation, often equipment and aircraft produced by the former Soviet

Union. Their role is not in conducting initial qualification training or the developing the broader aviation enterprise and no entity exists for this purpose. The success of the 6th SOS has steadily increased demand for their specialized capabilities in support of theater security cooperation efforts globally. As they are the only unit supporting these efforts as their primary mission, requests for 6th SOS support to Geographic Combatant Commander country engagement plans have exceeded 6th SOS capacity year in and year out. Unfulfilled requests vary by specific equipment or aircraft type, however percentages of unmet demand have routinely exceeded forty to sixty percent. The low density, high demand nature of combat aviation advisor capability was validated in the 2006 QDR with a doubling in forces of the 6th SOS which was again doubled via the 2010 QDR. This expansion has proved challenging due to the relatively small pool of viable candidates and the unique training requirements to produce qualified 6th SOS advisors which takes more than a year to produce a CAA with initial qualification. Unfortunately, under current fiscal pressures, the 6th SOS has been eyed as a potential bill payer and is fighting for survival.

Recognition that many current and prospective partner nations have been priced out of the market to acquire, operate and sustain U.S. aircraft and equipment, and that for many, U.S. aircraft are technologically beyond partner nations' capability to operate and maintain led to direction to the Services to address this challenge in expanding current and future building partner capacity capabilities. This recognition and direction manifested most prominently from requirements to support former Soviet Union Mi-8, Mi-17 and Mi-35 helicopters as well as An-20 and An-26 cargo aircraft, training, operations and maintenance in Iraq and Afghanistan. The proliferation of former Soviet

Union aircraft coupled with the cost of U.S. aircraft necessitated new U.S. capabilities appropriate to the broad range of potential partners. Department of Defense ability to support SFA requirements is characterized in the 2010 QDR as a “persistent shortfall” stating, “today, the Department meets only half of the current demand for training partner aviation forces” with analysis signaling continued growth in demand. To address this shortfall, the QDR established a goal of doubling special operations and general purpose forces, fixed and rotary wing capacity to train partner air forces. Doubling of the 6th SOS’s fixed and rotary wing capacity was recognized as only a partial solution given the their mission focus on advanced training and left initial qualification and foundational development efforts to the Services for general purpose forces for implementation.¹⁶ Though the Air Force was already moving toward acquisition of unique aircraft for developing nascent partner nation’s aviation capabilities, the 2010 QDR also directed the Air Force to “field light mobility and light attack aircraft in general purpose force units in order to increase their ability to work effectively with a wider range of partner air forces.”¹⁷

Institutionalizing the rotary wing component of AvSFA has proven more problematic for the Department in meeting current demand for rotary wing aircraft not U.S. produced or operated as well as posturing for projected demand characterized as a persistent absence of sufficient non-standard rotary wing (NSRW) developmental capacity. Divergence in demand for non-standard rotary wing capabilities versus DoD capacity for NSRW AvSFA, led to establishment the NSRW steering committee. The tri-lead (Office of Secretary of Defense, Policy (OSD(P)), OSD Cost Assessment and Program Evaluation (OSD CAPE), and Joint Staff J-8), committee lead’s NSRW

acquisition and SFA activities with the Department of the Army designated as the lead Service for studying the demand for Aviation Military Training Teams (AvMTT). AvMTT's are modeled after the 6th SOS Operational Aviation Detachment (OAD) which is nominally comprised of twelve personnel; however each OAD is tailored in size and composition according to mission requirements and does not reflect the associated personnel required for command and control or sustainment. In 2011, the committee released the NSRW study which addressed current and projected demand and articulated proposed solutions. The NSRW study indicated enduring global rotary wing (RW) SFA demand required a capacity of nine rotary wing AvFID capable MTTs beyond the Air Force's expeditionary (temporary) capability which is projected to be disestablished by 2014. The Air Force established the 321st and 438th Air Expeditionary Wings from within the general purpose force to develop foundational capabilities for the Iraq and Afghanistan air forces, including rotary wing capabilities; however these expeditionary units are not permanent force structure and decrement the rotary wing force structure within the U.S. Air Force combat search and rescue and missile field defense missions from which these resources are drawn. As follow-on to this study, U.S. Army Special Operations Command and the Department of the Army are proceeding with concepts to field capabilities which would account for six of the nine RW AvFID capable MTTs by 2017 to complement AFSOCs 6th SOS planned three AvFID MTT capacity to meet the nine MTT demand.¹⁸ However, the future of AFSOCs three AvFID MTT capacity is the subject of current budget offset debate and the Army AvFID MTTs are not envisioned to conduct missions outside the continental United States (OCONUS). Nonetheless, these proposed AvMTTs are focused on developing

advanced capabilities and are not intended to conduct foundational initial qualification, infrastructure or broader aviation enterprise development missions.

Each of the Services has been directed to establish within their force structure general purpose forces to conduct security force assistance, activities to build the capacity of partner nations' security forces.

Building and leveraging partner capacity will also be an absolutely essential part of this approach...highlights the need for the following types of capabilities: Multipurpose forces to train, equip, and advise indigenous forces; deploy and engage with partner nations; conduct irregular warfare; and support security, stability, transition, and reconstruction operations.¹⁹

Each has approached this mandate according to how they view the demand or the persistent absence of articulated demand for such forces, leveraging existing capabilities and minimizing impact on the force structure organized, trained and equipped for conventional warfare. Fiscal and manpower constraints, coupled with the absolute necessity to recapitalize and sustain existing force structure have significantly influenced the Services' enthusiasm for committing resources to developing dedicated SFA capabilities. The relatively small percentage of resources dedicated to SFA compared to the larger programs of record, have made nascent SFA initiatives ripe targets as budgetary offsets. For example, both the Air Forces Light Mobility Aircraft (LiMA) and Light Attack/Armed Reconnaissance (LAAR) aircraft programs have been cut from the Air Force budget²⁰, AFSOCs 6th SOS rotary wing AvFID capability expansion and perhaps its very existence are being re-examined and the Army and SOF investment in six NSRW AvMTT's is not projected to be realized until fiscal year 2017. These individual Service contributions to cross-Service AvSFA capacity are fractional in cost to larger programs. Comparatively in fiscal year 2011, the light mobility aircraft program cost was approximately 65 million dollars while the C-130J program

cost was approximately 1.6 billion dollars.²¹ Individually, each Service's contribution lacks the programmatic critical mass to compete for scarce resources. Collectively however, a joint proponent could potentially advocate effectively for a broader portfolio of combined SFA capabilities.

Relevant aviation capabilities and needs of partner nations which are in the interest of U.S. capacity building efforts, reside within various partner nation government entities such as ministry of defense or ministry of interior. These capabilities and needs span the spectrum of application, domain and scale such as maritime domain security and surveillance, search and rescue, battlefield mobility, border patrol, medical evacuation, supply and command and control. Thus, appropriateness of fixed or rotary wing platforms, propeller versus jet propulsion and fixed versus retractable landing gear are considerations for partner nation aviation development. These considerations not only have bearing on alignment with partner nation operational and sustainment capabilities, but also in alignment with the competencies, expertise and force structure within our own Services. The question then becomes one of how best to link considerations for partner nation aviation development in aligning risk and investment in institutionalizing appropriate U.S. AvSFA force structure with our national objectives. The way ahead lies in leveraging the natural specialization of aviation functions and forces across the Services to efficiently and effectively employ Service unique aviation contributions while preserving their separate conventional capability and capacity.

Aviation Enterprise Development - Operationalizing Aviation Security Force Assistance

The integration of aviation throughout not only U.S. military capabilities, but also throughout the civil and economic infrastructure of our domestic society and our participation in the larger global community, is testament to the reliance upon aviation

resources in the 21st century as a critical capability. It is reasonable therefore, that partner nation aviation enterprise development would be a critical component of overall U.S. building partner capacity strategy and efforts through aviation security force assistance in furtherance of shared U.S. and partner nations' national interests. Sustainment becomes a partner nations' limiting factor beyond initial acquisition in consideration of the economic and human capital costs associated with operating aircraft, infrastructure and processes. For many countries, sustainment of military aviation capabilities is beyond the economic absorptive capacity and human capital capacity without being directly linked to simultaneous civil aviation development. Air Force AvSFA proponents recognize this stating, "The cost and inherent dual use nature of aviation resources indicate that development and employment of civil and security sector aviation resources and infrastructure are optimized through close integration of investment and development in each sector."²² They are leading the way toward a whole of government solution aimed at broad spectrum development efforts known as Aviation Enterprise Development.

The Air Force Air Advisor Operating Concept defines the Aviation Enterprise below and expands the definition to include the civil component as well.

Aviation Enterprise: The sum total of all air domain resources, processes, and culture, including personnel, equipment, infrastructure, operations, sustainment, and airmindedness.²³ The aviation enterprise includes all air and ground activities required to establish, operate, maintain, and sustain an aviation capability. It encompasses both the military and civilian aviation capabilities of a partner nation. In addition, the term "airmindedness" refers to the culture within the aviation community that ties everything together. This amplifies the fact that the aviation enterprise is about more than just equipment.²⁴

While developing the aviation enterprise is foundational to developing sustainable aviation capabilities of a partner nations' military and security institutions, military AvSFA roles should be aligned with and limited to those developmental efforts directly linked to the military and security institutions. Civil aviation development, even in dual use infrastructure, processes and personnel should be lead by appropriate inter-agency departments. The Air Force advocates that aviation enterprise development is not solely the purview of DoD and has addressed this issue directly:

The aviation enterprise encompasses both military and civilian aviation capabilities of a partner nation; however, the task of USAF air advising is to focus on the development of the military arm of the aviation enterprise. The development of civilian aviation capabilities should be handled by other government agencies, such as the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA). Nevertheless, due to the dual-use nature of the aviation infrastructure, USAF air advising personnel need to be prepared to work with interagency personnel who are assisting in the development of partner nation civil aviation capabilities. An effective relationship will prevent unnecessarily duplicative or conflicting efforts. These relationships are established through the U.S. embassy country team in the specific partner nation.²⁵

Building aviation capacity through AvSFA is much more than selling airframes and training pilots. AvSFA is complex, dynamic and unique; integrating and operating aviation resources requires developing and coordinating a system of systems. Developing aviation capabilities requires first the capable and trainable human capital to operate and sustain aviation capabilities, to include the breadth of infrastructure, maintenance, command and control, logistics and operations. These facets are pre-requisite, foundational elements of the system of systems represented by integration of aviation capabilities into a nations' security architecture. As demonstrated in efforts to develop Afghan and Iraqi Ministry of Defense and Ministry of Interior aviation capabilities, the pool of human capital with requisite education are limiting factors.

Afghanistan human capital challenges are an order of magnitude greater, with literacy and numeracy rates of only fourteen percent among new recruits as of October, 2011.²⁶ AvSFA runs the gamut of advisory requirements to enable a partner nation to acquire, develop, integrate and sustain aviation capabilities from the strategic to the tactical, ministerial to unit level. Humans who operate the platforms, perform maintenance, control and handle aircraft must be mentally and physically capable of performing these functions. Human capital is the linchpin of aviation enterprise development and therefore necessitates coordinated U.S. interagency efforts to develop and sustain this requisite component if U.S. strategic objectives are to be achieved. This inter-relationship of aviation enterprise development leads to the broader inter agency engagement in support of national interests, including state and regional stability and is a natural non-threatening entry point for facilitating U.S. and partner nation cooperation through aviation enterprise development.

Air Force efforts to operationalize the AED concept include transitioning the training of Iraq and Afghanistan Air Advisors into a formalized Air Advisor Academy at Joint Base McGuire, Dix, Lakehurst in July 2011; establishing and integrating Mobility Support Advisor Squadrons (MSAS), an expeditionary air advisor capability, within its Contingency Response Forces; publication of the Air Advisor Operating Concept, which specifies foundational development roles and missions for general purpose force air advisors versus the advanced operational and tactical roles and missions of the 6th SOS CAA's; improving training for planning and coordination of partner nation Aviation Enterprise Development initiatives through tailored training for geographic Air Force component theater security cooperation planning staff. Separately, Air Force Special

Operations Command (AFSOC) conducts the Building Partner Aviation Capability Course (BPACC) several times annually. The BPACC brings Air Force, sister Service, inter-agency, non-governmental and most importantly foreign national military personnel, together to learn about processes and requirements for partner nation aviation development and U.S. capabilities and mechanisms available to support mutual aviation development objectives. In addition, the Air Force Inter-American Air Forces Academy (IAAFA) conducts training in Spanish for Latin American officers and non-commissioned officers on a broad range of foundational aviation competencies and mission specific basic and advanced courses. These efforts could be the genesis for a joint Service and potentially a broader whole of government approach to build both the civil and military capacity of partner nations in furtherance of our national interests.

The MSAS concept, recently demonstrated in a proof of concept mission with the Honduran Air Force in January and February 2012, exercised the comprehensive components of nascent Air Force general purpose forces Air Advisor capabilities. MSAS units reaching initial operating capability in December 2011, represent the breadth of agile combat support competencies including aerial port operations, air operations, command and control, communications, aircraft maintenance, aero medical evacuation and support requisite for aviation operations. The engagement strategy and objectives were developed based on the air advisor operating concept in concert with SOUTHCOM and Air Force Service component 12th Air Force (12 AF) theater security cooperation objectives, particularly linked to the 12 AF Sovereign Skies Expansion Program partner nations and objectives to build air domain awareness, air sovereignty and interoperability. The MSAS cadre attended the Air Advisor Academy with a

curriculum specific to the SOUTHCOM theater tailored to the Honduran engagement which included language and cultural skills, advisor assessment and mentoring training as well as training specific to small unit operations. Twenty Airmen from thirteen specialties worked with Honduran Air Force counterparts focused on developing communications, helicopter maintenance, aircrew survival and safety, air traffic control, generator maintenance and airbase defense. After action review by senior Air Force leaders, acknowledged the resounding success of the proof of concept mission, querying the need to extend this capability to other component commands, while simultaneously citing the absence of a defined demand signal in current theater security cooperation plans and the Air Force Campaign Support Plan.²⁷ Absent from the success of this initial engagement is the linkage to civil aviation capacity building efforts across our national strategy and other inter-agency partners. The 12 AF Sovereign Skies Expansion Program is an opportunity to integrate a whole of government, civil and military aviation enterprise development approach with MSAS capabilities and employment as an entry point for follow-on developmental efforts. While the integration of SOF and GPF AvSFA future engagement with Honduras is well developed, interagency integration is lagging and should be the focus of follow-on planning for 12 AF and the Air Force writ large.

AvSFA Implications and Challenges for the Joint Force and the Way Ahead

If the United States' is serious about building the capacity and capability of partner nations where internal and external threats challenge our shared national interests, serious investment in aviation security force assistance (AvSFA) capability and capacity across the Services is required. Development of a viable AvSFA capability within the Department of Defense will continue to challenge individual Services in the

face of current fiscal challenges, combined with competing recapitalization and modernization requirements and the necessity to maintain relevant and viable conventional capabilities. Relatively small investments in personnel, equipment and facilities dedicated to building partner capacity, limit the commitment of individual Services compared to high visibility programs with large investments and high tech capabilities, particularly absent well articulated combatant command requirements for building partner capacity. The competition for resources automatically places the lower cost investments at risk where tradespace is required to pay for higher cost programs. Similarly, contrasted with the traditional conventional combat missions of the Services, building partner capacity in general and AvSFA specifically, is incongruent with combat oriented culture and missions and thus lacks crucial advocacy in parity within competing interests. For AvSFA to be able to successfully compete for resources and to be responsive to Combatant Commander requirements, individual Service unique aviation capabilities and expertise must be linked to form a critical mass worthy of advocacy and competitive parity.

The United States has a long history of episodic building partner capacity and security assistance efforts in furtherance of our strategic interests and objectives. Within this history and continuing today, U.S. military prominence leading or contributing to these efforts cannot be overstated. The Vietnam War is perhaps the most well studied historical example of the military having a predominant role in nation building and security assistance while Iraq and Afghanistan serve as contemporary analytical parallels. The challenge in capacity building and security assistance is in applying a whole of government approach through unity of effort and unity of command for

maximum effectiveness and efficiency. The integration of civil and military capabilities brings challenges from dissimilar individual agency capabilities, capacity, equities and objectives and is compounded through multi-national participation. Only through codified integration of planning and execution across agencies together with assigned authority and accountability can an effective and efficient application of whole of government nation building and security assistance efforts have any hope of lasting success.

Security assistance and building partner capacity have become cornerstones of U.S. strategy for regions and nations with fragile or insufficient government capabilities or capacity to counter the causes of instability. Nonetheless, the United States continues to struggle with strategic and operational integration and coordination of civilian and military capabilities, capacity and activities to present a true whole of government approach in furtherance of national interests. Numerous efforts to codify policy and to develop operational capabilities for security assistance and building partner capacity efforts have begun to establish a foundation for future utility, from National Security Presidential Directive 44 issued by President Bush in 2005 to the 2011 Joint Publication 3-08 which states,

Meeting the challenges of current and future operations requires the concerted effort of all instruments of US national power plus foreign governmental agencies and military forces and civilian organizations.²⁸

As the challenges to our nation's security and national interests have evolved to include a broad range of state and non-state actors, our nation requires an integrated, agile, flexible and elegant portfolio of military capabilities applicable to mitigating threats and expanding the range and capabilities of partners with shared national interest. The emphasis on building the capacity of partner nations in our strategic narrative includes

the development of the aviation component of partner nations' security forces and institutions. The Department of Defense requires an appropriately organized, trained and equipped force to meet AvSFA requirements in support of national interests and objectives. Integration of Service unique aviation competencies together with synchronizing general purpose and special operations forces planning and activities in a coordinated, persistent and supporting developmental vector toward sustainable capability.

The distinct challenges, environmental conditions and capabilities of a partner nation, together with the objectives and interests of the United States are foundational to determining the appropriate Service equity relevant to specific AvSFA efforts and will vary accordingly. The challenge for the Services and the Joint Force is developing a relevant, sustainable capability and capacity to conduct AvSFA within the fiscal, manpower and equipment constraints, directly linked to strategic and operational objectives. Efficiencies for each Service and DoD as a whole can be gained through a joint solution, wherein each Service contributes force structure and fiscal resources according to their individual competencies and relative demand for those competencies. Integration and coordination of civil-military agencies and activities, unity of effort and unity of command as enduring challenges in nation building and security assistance, bridge the Vietnam War and operations in Iraq and Afghanistan. Linked with inter-agency and other partner nation relationships, competencies and capacity, it is reasonable that the Department of Defense, as the agency most capable of conducting global operations should integrate and lead the initial development of partner nation security forces development efforts. However, it is also reasonable that in developing

partner nation aviation capabilities, leveraging DoD experience, capacity and expeditionary capability as a transition to whole of government effort is an effective and efficient mechanism to achieve national objectives. Much could be gained in terms of capturing both experience and capabilities in transitioning Iraq and Afghanistan air advisor organizations from Overseas Contingency Operations (OCO) funding to baseline budget programs. If these units were integrated with the MSAS and Air Advisor Academy into an Aviation Enterprise Development organization and linked with the 6th SOS and IAAFA, the foundation for a joint AvSFA capability would be formed, upon which future non-standard rotary wing, light mobility, light attack and inter-agency capabilities could be integrated. Beyond this, such an organization could be leveraged as a Joint solution to consolidate Service unique aviation competencies, enable efficiencies in organizing, training, equipping and force presentation. This approach could provide a single source range of options for partner nation aviation development while simultaneously providing advocacy and standardization for unique capabilities not represented in the general purpose forces or special operations forces.

Conclusion

Where U.S. and partner nations' national interests intersect, the role of aviation cannot be overstated. No other means enables nations to close in time and space with events or circumstances affecting security and stability as effectively as aviation. If U.S. national security is directly linked to partner nations' ability to provide for their own security, it is in our national interest to build their aviation capabilities. Just as aviation development efforts with Colombia, the Republic of Korea and NATO have been incremental, decade's long, requiring a range of capabilities, an expanded spectrum of partners will require an expanded menu of options appropriate to their economic,

human capital and infrastructure resources. Development of aviation security force assistance (AvSFA) capability within the Department of Defense for a range of partners has been directed. However, a Joint solution is likely the most efficient approach to link Service unique aviation competencies, provide for coordinated planning and operational employment and sufficient advocacy in a fiscally constrained environment. The Air Force Aviation Enterprise Development concept could be a Joint solution and serve as a foundation for broader interagency civil and military aviation development efforts.

Endnotes

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